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**UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN CAPE VERDEAN  
EFL CLASSROOMS**

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em Estudos Ingleses, sob a orientação de Jessica Marie Buchanan, MA.**

The Jury,

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“I will Praise you, O Lord, with all my heart;

Before the ‘gods’ I will sing your praise.

I will bow down towards your Holy Temple

And will praise your name

For your love and your faithfulness,

For you have exalted above all things

your name and your word.

When I called, you answered me;

You made me bold and stout-hearted”.

Psalm 138:1, 2, 3

*“Blessed is the man who finds wisdom,  
the man who gains understanding,  
For she is more profitable than silver  
and yields better returns than gold.  
She is more precious than rubies;  
nothing you desire can compare with her”.*  
Proverbs 3: 13, 14, 15

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## I - INTRODUCTION

According to Chaney (1998) speaking is “the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts” (as quoted from Kayi, 2006, n.p.). Speaking is an important part of a second or foreign language learning and teaching. For many years English Language teachers have taught speaking as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues. However, in the present days because of the new approach called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), the goal of teaching speaking should improve students’ communicative skills so that students can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriately in each communicative situation (Kayi, 2006, n.p.).

Many scholars as Harmer, Hymes, Canale and Swain and also English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers agree that learners learn to speak in the second or foreign language by interacting. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is the best way to put this in practice.

Larsen-Freeman (1986) claimed that we “learn to communicate by communicating (p.131).” And that is the fundamental base of the term ‘communicative’. According to Ming-Chung, the Communicative Language Teaching Approach centers on the notion of Communicative Competence (n.p.). The term communicative competence was originally developed by the sociolinguistic Hymes, as a response to limitations in Chomsky’s Competence/Performance model of language. And later on, in the early 1980s, it was further developed by Canale and Swain. And according to Canale (1983), Communicative Competence refers to “the underlying systems of knowledge and skill required for communication (as cited by Beale, n.p.).

Teaching English as a foreign language in Cape Verde has been a challenge for many Capeverdians teachers. The English Language has been gaining importance in Cape Verde, since more touristic enterprise has been created and the English Language is now an important instrument for jobs opportunities.

Taking into account the development of the English Language in Cape Verde, this researcher chose to talk about Teaching Speaking in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in Cape Verde, referring specifically to communication strategies.

Many English Language learners in Cape Verde, especially the students in secondary schools, have few opportunities to practice the language outside the classroom environment. This may be one among various factors that lead learners to have problems when communicating freely with a native speaker of English. As said by Corder, Faerch and Kasper, Tarone and Váradi, the scholars that will be discussed in detail in the literature review, when learners face problems in communicating their ideas, opinions and desires, they try to solve these problems by using communication strategies. According to Corder, Communication Strategies are “systematic techniques employed by a speaker to express his/her meaning when faced with some difficulty or problem. Difficulty or problem in this definition is taken to refer uniquely to the speaker’s inadequate command of the language used in the interaction” (quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 16).

The aim of this paper is to answer the following question: What types of communication strategies do students of different levels in Cape Verde use more frequently when faced with problems in communication? The goals of answering this question are: to help teachers understand communication strategies, to identify what kind of communication strategies students use and when students use them and to help teachers to assist students’ communication.

This paper will have the following structure:

The Literature Review is going to present the definitions of communication strategies, the typologies proposed by various scholars, the major factors that influence communication strategies (one of which is proficiency level).

A field research will be conducted in different Capeverdean secondary schools in three different levels. Speaking activities were observed using a tally sheet to gather information on communication strategies.

The data collected will be presented and carefully analyzed. And with the results of the field research in conjunction with the literature review the researcher will make some conclusion about the use of communication strategies and present appropriate suggestions and recommendations which will contribute to the development of teaching speaking and an understanding of communication strategies in different levels in Cape Verde.

## **II- LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Defining Communication Strategies**

When communicating with others, foreign language learners may face problems with conveying their meaning. These problems are solved through the application of some strategies. These strategies are called Communication Strategies. Before conducting a study to identify communication strategies students of different levels use more frequently in Cape Verde, it is important to understand exactly what communication strategies are and how they function.

The term Communication Strategies was first referred to by Selinker (1972) in his paper “Interlanguage” which described some class of errors made by the learners of a second or foreign language. By Interlanguage it is meant the language of second and foreign language learners. These errors were considered a by-product, that is, the result of the attempt of the learner to express his meaning in speech spontaneously with an inadequate grasp of the target language system (Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 15).

It is necessary before continuing with the definition of communication strategies, to make a distinction between Communication Strategies and Learning Strategies. This distinction is important because according to Tarone (1980) a communication strategy cannot be a learning strategy and a learning strategy cannot be a communication strategy (as cited by Faerch and Kasper, 1983, p.67).

Beginning with learning strategies, a foreign learner of English who is talking with a native speaker of the same language, through the conversation the native speaker says a word that the learner did not know or was in his /her passive vocabulary. Throughout the conversation, the learner keeps repeating the same word. In this case, the learner is repeating the word not with the objective of solving a problem in communication, but rather to learn the word. Here, the learner is using repetition as a learning strategy. According to Tarone (1983) learning strategies are attempts to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language, that is, learning strategies refer to activities in which the learner may take part in, with the objective of improving his/her



competence in the target language. The learner uses learning strategies with the purpose of learning a new word or concept. This can be through repetition or memorization.

However, communication strategies are used by a learner when he/she faces problems in communicating his/her meaning, that is, it is used by the learner to express concepts which are unknown in the target language. For instance, in a conversation the learner wants to say that he lives in the countryside but does not know the exact word in the target language. Instead of saying 'countryside' the learner says 'I live in a place with lots of trees, animals, mountains...' In this case, the purpose of the learner is not to learn the word 'countryside' but to solve his lack of vocabulary by paraphrasing or exemplifying the concept. In this following section will be present the definitions of communication strategies given by various scholars. But, the given definitions are different according to their view of communication strategies.

Corder (1983) defines communication strategies as systematic techniques employed by a speaker to express his/her meaning when faced with some difficulty or problem. By difficulty or problem it is meant the speaker's inadequate command of the language used in interaction (as cited by Faerch & Kasper).

And Tarone (1981) says that communication strategies are attempts to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the second language learner and the linguistic knowledge of the learner's interlocutor, that is, the person the learner interacts with, in real communication situations. In addition, she claimed that they are "negotiation of an agreement on meaning" between interlocutors (Tarone, p.288 as cited by Ellis, 1985, p. 181). Similar to Corder, Tarone focus on the problem-orientedness of communication strategies.

Faerch & Kasper claimed that communication strategies are "potentially conscious plans set up by a language user in order to solve problems in communication (as quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.2). The focus of Faerch and Kasper is on consciousness while the focus of Corder and Tarone is on Problem-orienttness. Váradi defined communication strategies as "a conscious attempt to communicate the learner's thought when the Interlanguage structure are inadequate to convey that thought" (quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.63). Further discussion about communication strategies being problem-oriented and conscious attempts to communicate will be presented in section 2.3 Major Factors that influence Communication Strategies of Foreign Learners.

Along with these definitions each author proposes a detailed typology of communication strategies which will be discussed below. And, after an examination of

the typologies of communication strategies, one typology will be chosen on which to base the field research.

## 2.2 A typology of Communication Strategies

Perhaps because of the different definition of communication strategies, there is no generally agreed typology to describe them. Various typologies have been proposed by Váradi (1973), Tarone (1976), Corder (1978) and Faerch and Kasper (1980). This section is going to present the different theories outlined by these various scholars. There are some differences but also similarities in their descriptions of communication strategies. This section is important because it helps to lead the reader to recognize the various typologies and complexities of understanding communication strategies.

As defined by Corder (1983) communication strategies are “systematic techniques employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty. Difficulty in this definition is taken to refer uniquely to the speaker’s inadequate command of the language used in the interaction” (as quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 16). In addition, Corder said that there is a lack of balance between means and ends that is the learner lacks vocabulary or other language function to express the intended message. Corder added that when in the course of interaction the learner finds himself faced with this situation (lack of balance between means and ends), he has only two options open to him. The first choice is to adapt his message to the resources he has available, that is, adjust his ends to his means. These procedures are called *Message Adjustment Strategies* or *Risk Avoidance Strategies*. The other option is that the learner can attempt to increase his resources by one means or another in order to realize his communicative intentions. These strategies are called *Resource Expansion Strategies* (as cited by Faerch and Kasper, 1983, p. 17).

### **2.2.1 Types of Message Adjustment & Resource Expansion Strategies as defined by Corder (as cited by Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 17)**

#### **A) Message Adjustment Strategies or Risk Avoidance Strategies**

- **Topic Avoidance**

It is when the learner tries not to talk about topics which require the rules or forms of the target language that the learner does not know very well. When the learner avoids certain topics, the learner can either change the topic of discourse or give a non-verbal response.

- **Message Abandonment**

Here the learner tries to express his message but because of his/her lack of linguistic resource, he gives up, that is, the learner does not try to find a solution for his/her lack but rather chooses to abandon the message.

- **Semantic Avoidance**

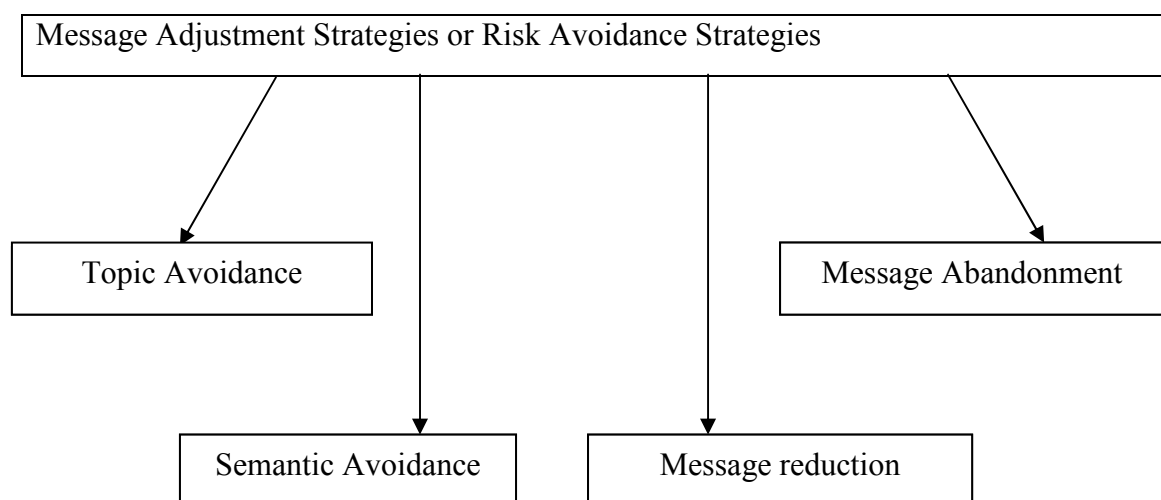
A learner says something slightly different from what he/she intended, but what he says is generally relevant to the topic of discourse.

- **Message Reduction**

The learner says less precisely what he/she intended to say. This is often seen as rather vague general talk.

These are the Message Adjustment or Risk Avoidance Strategies that students may use when faced with problems in communication. However, these strategies are less desirable because they can lead the learner to abandon the message instead of uttering it. Of these four strategies, Semantic Avoidance is more preferable than Topic Avoidance or Message Reduction because here the learner will be closer to his or her intended message. Of course, Message Abandonment is the least desirable option.

**Figure 2.1.** Corder's Typology (adapted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983)



**B) Resource Expansion Strategies or Achievement Strategies as defined by Corder**

According to Corder (1983), more than one strategy can be employed simultaneously when the learner is using achievement strategies. All of them are risk-taking, that is, misunderstanding or communication break-down can occur (as cited by Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 18). However, when using these strategies, there is more possibility to achieve the intended message than when using Message Adjustment strategies.

- **Borrowing**

The learner uses other linguistic resources that are not the target language. The learner attempts to use invented or borrowed items more or less approximated to the rules of the target language structure as far as the learner's Interlanguage allows.

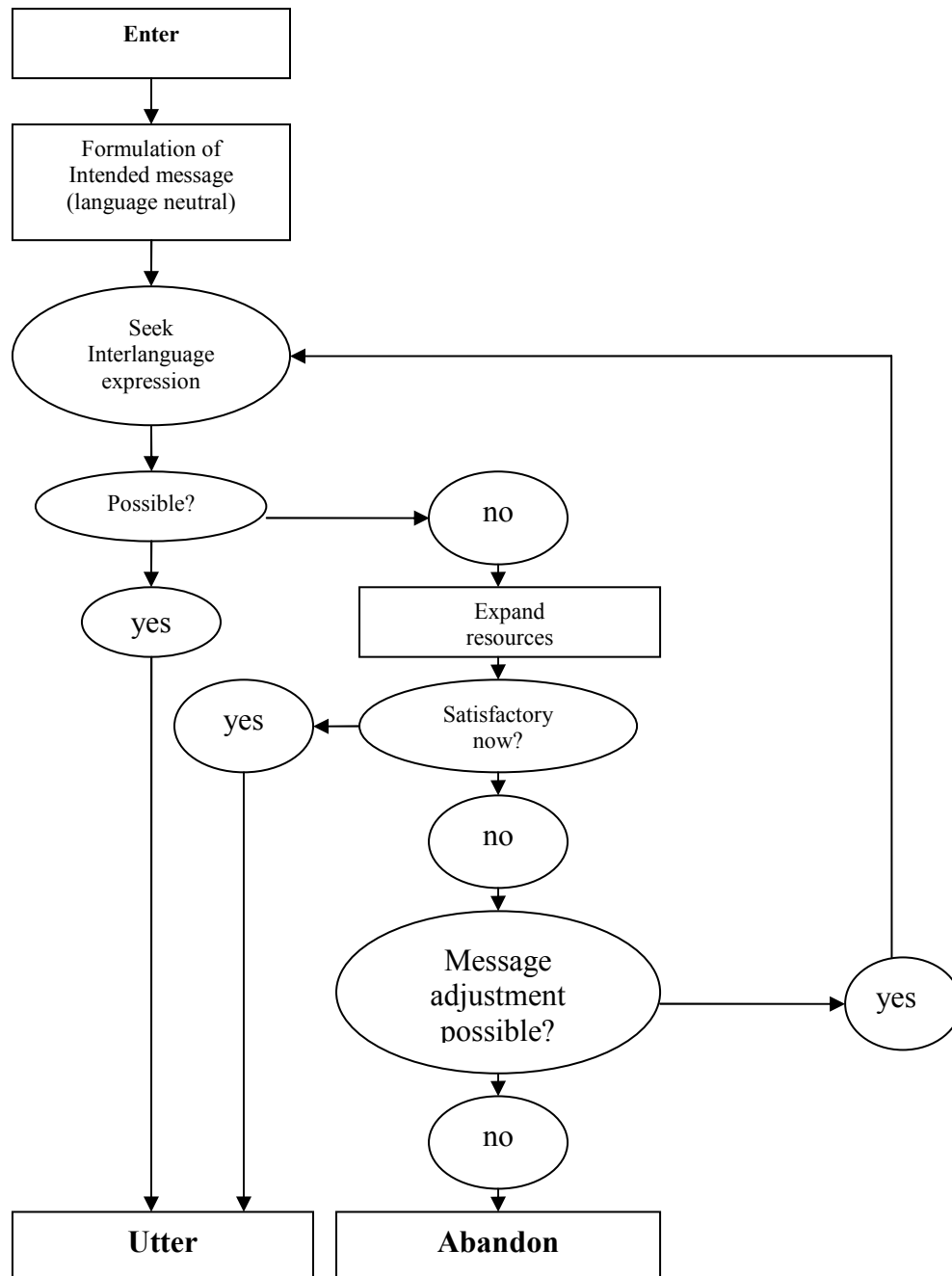
- **Paraphrase/Circumlocution**

According to Corder paraphrase or circumlocution is when the learner is trying to solve a problem with the knowledge he/she already has, without trying to find the exact concept he/she wants to communicate to the interlocutor. Faerch and Kasper (1983) shared the same idea of Corder. They claimed that Paraphrase or Circumlocution is when the learner tries to solve the problem of communication with the knowledge he has. According to Ellis (1983, p. 185) the learner replaces the target language item by describing or exemplifying it.

### **2.2.2 Corder's Model of Speech Process**

The following figure 2.2 is based on Corder's model of speech process and shows how a foreign learner structures his message. First, the learner formulates the message he or she intends to communicate and then the learner searches for expressions in his or her second or foreign language (Interlanguage expression). If the learner finds the expression that helps him or her to utter the intended message, he or she utters. But if the learner did not find the interlanguage expression he or she begins to expand his resources, that is, the learner makes use of non-verbal expressions to communicate the message. If the learner could not find the appropriate interlanguage expression, he or she tries to adjust the message. This message adjustment is divided in two phases. First, if the message adjustment is possible the learner goes back to search for an interlanguage expression. And finally, if the learner could not adjust his message he or she gives up or abandons the message. The phase where the learner adjusts his/her message is where the communication strategies as topic avoidance, semantic avoidance, message reduction, borrowing, paraphrase/circumlocution takes place. And if Capeverdean teachers are able to recognize the use and timing of communication strategies in their students' communication, then they can help and encourage students not to abandon the message, but rather to continue trying to utter the intended message. Corder is the only author who presented timing and sequence in his explanation of communication strategies. Corder presents in the following model of speech process the sequence of a learners' attempt to utter the intended message step by step, and when communication strategies takes place in solving the problem being faced.

**Figure 2.2 A foreign learner trying to utter his/her intended message.**  
 (adapted from Corder in Faerch & kasper, 1983, p.19)



### 2.2.3 Types of Avoidance Behaviour and Achievement Behaviour as defined by Faerch & Kasper (1983)

The second typology to be reviewed is Faerch & Kasper's. Faerch & Kasper (1983) adopted the model "Planning and Execution of Intellectual Behaviour" to describe communication strategies. They defined Intellectual behaviour as when the learner has to choose more or less consciously (this is why they defined Communication strategies as potentially conscious) between many alternative response to a certain given stimulus. In addition, they said that intellectual behaviour refers to "all psychic and behavioural (observable) actions which involve cognitive processes (as quoted from Faerch & Kasper, p.23)".

#### **Avoidance Behaviour**

Faerch and Kasper (1983) classified communication strategies as part of a particular plan which is activated when the initial communication plan cannot be carried out.

Based on the above definition the two authors claimed that there are two different ways in which learners might behave when faced with problems in communication. First, learners can solve these problems by adopting *Avoidance Behaviour* and second, by adopting *Achievement Behaviour*. Further, underlying these two different approaches there are two concepts: *Reduction strategies* governed by avoidance behaviour and *Achievement Strategies* governed by achievement behaviour.

Reduction Strategies are attempts to do away with a problem. They involve the learner giving up part of his original communicative goal. In addition, reduction strategies can be subdivided into two categories:

- a) *Formal Reduction Strategies*
- b) *Functional Reduction Strategies*.

*Formal Reduction strategies*: these happen when the learner is trying to avoid producing non –fluent or incorrect utterances involving forms of the target language, that is, learners may decide to communicate by means of a "reduced" system (Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.40).

In addition, they claimed that a learner uses formal reduction because he/she wants to avoid errors to facilitate speech, that is, the learner wants to increase his/her fluency.

In formal reduction the form or structure is reduced. The most common types of formal reduction used by a foreign learner are phonological, syntactic and lexical reduction.

example: “He asked him to go...” instead of “he made him go...”

In this case, the speaker does not have the word “made” in active vocabulary. He/she uses the word “ask”, but this change in lexical form reduces meaning.

*Functional Reduction Strategies*: these are employed when learner experience problems in the planning phase (formulating his message) or in the execution phase (trying to utter the formulated message). In this stage, the learner reduces his/her communicative goal in order to avoid a problem, that is, in functional reduction the communicative goal or actual content of the message is reduced. These involve the learner avoiding certain speech acts or discourse functions of the language, avoiding, abandoning or replacing certain topics and avoiding modality markers such as politeness and social distance (Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.43).

example: “he does sport” instead of “he plays football and basketball...”

In this case, the specific sports and number of sports is lost because the speaker does not have the “functional” vocabulary.

### **Achievement Behaviour**

By using an Achievement Strategy, the learner attempts to solve problems in communication by expanding his communicative resources, that is, the learner decides to keep to the original communicative goal but compensates for insufficient means or makes the effort to retrieve the required items. The achievement strategies are subdivided in:

a) *Compensatory Strategies*

b) *Retrieval Strategies*

*Compensatory Strategies* are used when the learner is trying to solve problems in the planning phase due to insufficient linguistic resources. The compensatory strategies, however, are subdivided according to what resources the learner uses in trying to solve his planning problem.



• **Non- Cooperative Strategies** are compensatory strategies which do not call for the assistance of the interlocutor, that is, if the learner is facing a problem in communication he/she does not show it to the interlocutor in order to be helped. Below are some non- cooperative strategies outlined by Faerch & Kasper (1983).

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 below outline non-cooperative strategies such as First Language and Second Language based strategies respectively.

**Table 2.1 First Language (L1)/ Other Language than Second Language (L3) Strategies**

Non- Cooperative Strategies	Examples
<i>Code Switching</i> : The learner uses a form outside of the second language (L2).	"I don't have any 'caneta' . (caneta is the Portuguese word for pen)
<i>Interlingual Transfer/ Foreignizing</i> : The learner uses a non- L2 form but adapts it to make it appear like a L2 form	"Paisage" for landscape. The Portuguese word has been unsuccessfully changed into an English word.
<i>Inter/Intralingual Transfer/Literal Translation</i> : The learner translates an L1 or L3 (other language than second language) form. These happen especially in situation in which the learner considers the L2 form similar to his/her L1. The learner may apply strategies of inter/intralingual transfer.	"Housement" instead of marriage. Here the learner comes up with the word "housement" because the Portuguese word for marriage is "casamento". The learner divides this word in two parts and then translates it, replacing "casa" for house and "mento" for ment.

**Table 2.2 Second Language (L2) - Based Strategies**

Non- Cooperative Strategies	Examples
<i>Substitution</i> : the learner replaces one L2 form with another, that is, he/she uses a word in the target language which does not communicate exactly the concept which the learner desires to use.	"animal" for rabbit"
<i>Paraphrase</i> : the learner replaces an L2 item by describing or exemplifying it.	"He cleaned the house with a ... it sucks air" for vacuum cleaner.
<i>Word Coinage</i> : The learner replaces an L2 item with an item made up from L2 forms.	'Picture palace' instead of gallery.
Restructuring: the learner develops an alternative constituent plan to communicate his intended message.	For instance, if the learner did not know the word, "sibling" they might say something as: - "I have two..." - "I have a brother and a sister".

### **Non- Linguistic Strategies**

According to Faerch and Kasper the learner compensates, using non-linguistic means such as mime, gesture and sound-imitation. “Although non-linguistic strategies are sometimes used as the learner attempts to solve a communicative problem, they also are often used to ‘support’ other verbal strategies” (quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.52).

- **Co-operative Strategies**

The learner cooperates with his or her interlocutor to solve a problem in communication. This can be by direct appeal or indirect appeal.

**Direct appeal:** The learner overtly requests assistance

(Native speaker): What colour is it?

(Learner): er amarelo (laugh) er-er what’s colour is this? - (points to the sweater).

(Amarelo is the Portuguese word for yellow)

- **Indirect appeal:** The learner does not request assistance from his/her interlocutor, but indicates the need for help by means of a pause and/or facial expression.

Retrieval Strategies are used when the learner has a communication problem in locating the required item but decides to keep trying to utter the intended message rather than use a compensatory strategy. Below are some retrieval strategies as outlined by Faerch & Kasper (1983, p.52).

- **Waiting:** The learner waits to see if he/she finds an item by him/herself.

- **Using Semantic Field:** The learner identifies the semantic field to which the item belongs and runs through items belonging to this field until he locates the item.

- **Using Other Languages:** The learner thinks of the form of the item in another language and then translates it into the L2 (similar to Faerch & Kasper’s “Foreignizing”).

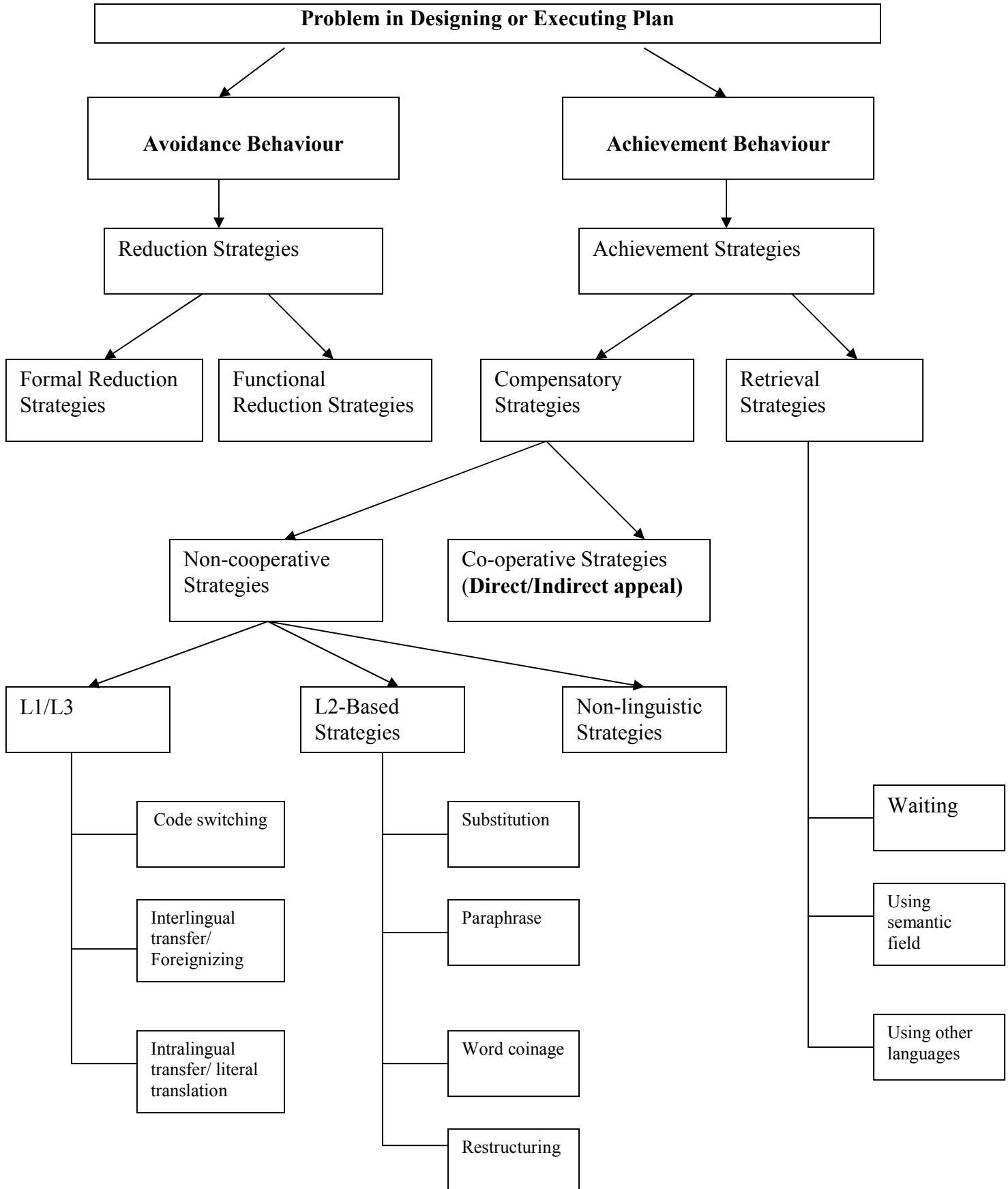
example: “Paisage” for landscape

(“Paisage” is a translation of the word “paisagem” which means landscape.

Because there are some words in Portuguese which are similar to English, the learner uses this word thinking that it is the right word).

The following figure 2.3 is a summary of all the Strategies presented by Faerch & Kasper (1983).

**Figure 2.3 Avoidance Behaviour & Achievement Behaviour Strategies (adapted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983)**



#### 2.2.4. Tarone's Communication Strategies

The third typology we will review in understand communication strategies is Tarone's typology.

According to Tarone (1977) a learner uses communication strategy because:

- 1- "The learner desires to communicate a meaning x to a listener";
- 2- "The learner believes the linguistic or sociolinguistic structure desired to communicate meaning x is unavailable, or is not shared with the listener" (as quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.65);

In this case, the learner will:

- a) "Avoid- not attempt to communicate meaning x; or
- b) Attempt alternate means to communicate meaning x".

The learner stops trying alternatives when it seems clear to the learner that there is shared meaning (as quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.65).

All the below listed strategies and examples were quoted from Faerch and Kasper (1983, p.62, 63). The typologies of communication strategy proposed by Tarone are:

#### Paraphrase

**a) Approximation:** use of a single target language vocabulary item or structure, which the learner knows is not correct, but which shares enough semantic features in common with the desired item to satisfy the speaker.

Example: Pipe for water pipe.

**b) Word Coinage:** The learner makes up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept.

Example: Airball for balloon.

**c) Circumlocution:** The learner describes the characteristic or elements of the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language item or structure.

Example: 'She is, uh, smoking something. I don't know what's its name. That's, uh, Persian and we use in Turkey, a lot.' (A native speaker of Turkey describing a picture of a caterpillar smoking a water pipe).

#### Borrowing

**a) Literal Translation:** the learner translates word for word from the native language (similar to Faerch & Kasper inter/intralingual transfer).

Example: “I have 17 years old” instead of saying “I am 17 years old”.

In this case the learner is making a literal translation of the verb ‘have’ from his/her native language into English.

**b) Language Switch:** the learner uses the native language term without bothering to translate.

Example: Balon for ballon

Tirtil for Caterpillar

**c) Appeal for assistance:** The learner asks for the correct term.

Example: ‘What is this?’

**d) Mime:** The learner uses non-verbal strategies in place of a lexical item or action.

Example: Clapping one’s hands to illustrate applause.

### **Avoidance**

**a) Topic Avoidance:** The learner simply tries not to talk about concepts for which the target language item or structure is not known.

**b) Message Abandonment:** The learner begins to talk about a concept but is unable to continue and stops in mid- utterance.

### **2.2.5 Váradi’s Communication Strategies**

Váradi’s classic paper on ‘Strategies of Target Language Communication: Message Adjustment’, establishes a model of Interlanguage production which focuses on the strategies the learner employs when he/she experiences a ‘hiatus’, that is, a problem in his/her Interlanguage repertoire. Váradi proposed the hypothesize model that in order to adjust his/her message to his/her communicative resources, the learner either replaces the meaning or form of his/her intended message by using items which are part of his/her Interlanguage, or he/she reduces his/her message on either the formal or functional level (as cited by Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.75).

### **Describing the Adjustment Phenomenon by Váradi**

In order to understand Váradi's study one must be clear about when the communication process begins. For the learner, the starting point in an examination of communication in a particular target language (T) is the meaning he/she wishes to communicate. By 'meaning' it is meant ideas, wishes, emotions that the target language learner (TL) desires to communicate.

The learner's problem is to find the appropriate Target language form (T form) to convey his/her meaning. This potential utterance is called the learner's *optimal message*. Optimal message is the utterance the target language learner would use if his/her abilities in the target language (T) matched those in the base language (B) or mother tongue (L1). Meaning and form of the learner's message must be considered separately. The meaning of the learner optimal message is called his/her *optimal meaning* (OMn).

But according to Váradi, the first stage of the target language learner's communication process is when the learner chooses a suitable form to utter his/her message (as cited by Faerch & kasper, 1983, p.82).

#### **A- Selection of meaning**

In this stage two possibilities may take place:

First, the learner may find a satisfactory form to utter his/her message (A form) through formal reduction or replacement and having found a suitable means to express his/her meaning, the learner is ready to produce an utterance which is called an *actual message*.

Actual message is defined as the utterance the learner finally produces, as literally interpreted by a target language speaker. The learner may fail to achieve his/her aim, that is, utter the message he/she wishes to communicate and produce a form which is deviant or even subject to misinterpretation. The target language speaker's literal interpretation of an *actual message* is the *actual meaning*.

Second, the learner may feel unable to formulate his/her *optimal meaning*, in which case it is claimed that the learner often adjusts his meaning. This adjustment of meaning usually involves sacrificing part of the *optimal meaning*, loss of precision, or it may lead to a complete shift of the *optimal meaning*. The meaning the learner finally selects for transmission in such cases is called the *adjusted meaning*.

When the learner sacrifices part of the meaning he/she originally wanted to communicate he/she is reducing. This process is called *reduction*.

However, instead of reducing the original message the learner may choose to replace it, which is, substituting new subject matter preferably as close to his/her optimal meaning. The process is called *replacement* (as cited by Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.82, 83).

## **B- Selection of Form**

The following procedures are proposed by Váradi for the selection of a form to utter an intended message by the target language learner.

If the learner does not find an appropriate form to utter his/her *optimal meaning* (or the learner's adjusted meaning), the learner first resorts to *formal replacement*, that is, to paraphrase or circumlocution. These attempts to find a satisfactory formal expression are most relevant to the stage at which communication of the *optimal meaning* remains the learner's objective. However, "circumlocution and paraphrase may occur as well in any attempt to encode an *adjusted meaning*. Moreover, it should be emphasized that the learner may not be able to encode the first *adjusted meaning* he/she selects, so that further modification becomes necessary. From this point, what was termed the adjusted meaning may turn out to be the last in a series of modified meanings, a series characterized by progressive loss of elements comprising the optimal meaning" (as quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 84).

"When searching for a form in which to utter the intended message, learners may not only use intentional reduction in meaning but also *formal reduction*. This strategy includes, first, elimination of certain formal target language elements and second, reduction in the range of synonyms of the target language forms, that is, overuse of one form at the expense of the others. However, target language learners may come to notice that recourse to elimination of certain formal target language elements and reduction in the range of synonyms of the target language forms does not affect the transmission of meaning. Indeed, the latter will not even result in any formal deviation from target language. Moreover, the use of these strategies may facilitate communication by increasing fluency. And as result, learners may either fail to make full use of their capabilities or feel little urge to improve them" (as quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 85).

To make a difference between formal reduction from formal replacement of any other source, it is essential to presume that the learner has at least a passive awareness

of the correct form to be used to utter the intended message (as cited by Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.85).

The following table is a summary of the discussed authors' typologies and which ones lead to successful communication. Canale and Swain consider "the ability of using communication strategies as the learner's 'strategic competence' (quoted from Faerch and Kasper, 1983, n.p.)". Basically they are saying that when learners use communication strategies they are expanding their communication abilities and capacities of understanding the target language.

**Table 2.3 Summary of the Typologies**

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Communication Strategies Which lead to successful communication</b>	<b>Communication Strategies which do not lead to successful communication</b>
Corder's Typology	Borrowing, Paraphrase/ Circumlocution, Semantic Avoidance	Topic Avoidance, Message Abandonment
Faerch & Kasper's Typology	Formal Reduction, Functional Reduction, Direct Appeal, Indirect Appeal, Code Switching, Interlingual Transfer, Intralingual Transfer, Substitution, Paraphrase, Word Coinage, Restructuring, Non-linguistic Strategies, Waiting, Using Semantic Field, Using other languages	Paraphrase, Restructuring Direct Appeal
Tarone's Typology	Paraphrase( <i>Approximation, Word Coinage and Circumlocution</i> ) Borrowing ( <i>Literal Translation, Language Switch, Appeal for assistance , Mime</i> ) Avoidance ( <i>Topic Avoidance, Message Abandonment</i> )	Circumlocution, Appeal for Assistance
Váradi's Typology	Formal Reduction Formal Replacement	Formal Replacement, (Paraphrase/Circumlocution)



In addition to understanding typology, it is important to understand other factors that influence the use of communication strategies.

### **2.3 Major factors that Influence Communication Strategies of foreign Learners**

There are many factors which influence the use of communication strategies. The factors listed below are important when talking about the use of communication strategies. In the Capeverdian context, proficiency level, problem-orienteness, consciousness, interlocutors, personality, dialogue/monologue, problem-source and learning situation can all influence students' use of communication strategies.

#### **2.3.1. Proficiency Level**

The proficiency level of the learner influences his/her choice of strategy. Tarone (1977) notes that the less able students whom she investigated preferred to use reduction strategies to achievement strategies. Ellis (1983) also found that one of the learners in his longitudinal study opted for reduction type behaviour in the earlier stages, but increasingly turned to achievement type behaviour as he progressed. Bialystok (1983) found that advanced learners used significantly more L2- based strategies and fewer L1- based strategies than less advanced learners. In general, therefore, L2 learners of limited proficiency prefer either reduction strategies or L1- based achievement strategies such as paraphrasing (as cited by Ellis, 1985, p.185 - 186).

#### **2.3.2 Problem Orientedness and Consciousness**

Two other factors which influence the use of communication strategies are consciousness and problem-orientedness. The authors discussed below disagree concerning problem-orientedness and consciousness in the use of communication strategies.

Learners may be aware of the communication problems they may encounter and know which types of communication strategies they can use to solve the problem. If they are conscious about the problem and know how to solve it, then their communication competence should be increased. However, it is believe by the

researcher, this based on her four years of experience in secondary schools, that many secondary school learners in Cape Verde may not be conscious about their use of communication strategies. In order to further understand the relationship between problem-orientedness and consciousness, we should examine them in detail.

**A)** Problem-Orientedness is the phase where the learner faces a problem in transmitting the message he or she wishes to transmit. This ‘problem’ is defined as the learner’s inability to communicate because of his or her lack or insufficient existing knowledge to express the message he wants to, and consequently the learner has to expand his resources. If communication strategies are problem-oriented, Faerch and Kasper claim that “one can adopt an alternative approach which acknowledges the potential problematicity of FL communication, and incorporate ways of dealing with such problems into the syllabus. In order to do so, it will be necessary to learn much more about the types of communication problems which might occur in various types of interaction and how learners cope with them most successfully” (quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.32).

Ellis (1985) is of the opinion that communication strategies are problem-oriented, that is, they are employed by the learner because he lacks the linguistic resources required to express an intended meaning (p.181). Corder (1983) agrees when he pointed out that communication strategies are problem-oriented because there is no sufficient balance between means and ends. In a native speaker, these are in balance assuming that he or she always has the linguistic means to express the message he or she wishes to communicate. However, in a learner of a second or foreign language these are not in balance. The learner will sometimes wish to convey messages which his linguistic resources do not permit him to express successfully (as cited by Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.17). While the majority of the authors discussed agree that communication strategies are problem-oriented there is less consensus concerning whether or not communication strategies are conscious or unconscious.

**B)** The other concept, Consciousness, is defined as the phase where the learner faces a problem in transmitting his or her message and the learner knows or is conscious that he or she can either solve the problem by expanding his resources by using communication strategies or abandoning the message.

Váradi defined Communication Strategies by relating them with the terms Unconsciousness or Unintentional and Consciousness or Deliberate. First,

communication strategies are unconsciousness or unintentional when they are the result of production strategies and reflect the transitional state of the learner's L2 (Second Language) knowledge. Second they are conscious or deliberate when the learner is conscious that he or she is reducing or replacing meaning.

Faerch and Kasper (1983), classify communication strategies as part of a specific kind of plan which is used when the initial plan cannot be carried out. The learner has to substitute a "strategic plan" for his original production plan because he or she knows that he or she lacks means to implement the production plan. The linguistic insufficiency is not the only factor that influences the communication strategy that a learner uses. Also, Learning Strategies influence the type of communication strategies a learner employs (as cited by Ellis, 1985, p.181). In addition, Faerch and Kasper (1980) defended that communication strategies are potentially conscious, adding that learners may not be aware of their use of communication strategies (Ellis, 1985, p.181).

### **2.3.3 Interlocutors**

It is now fairly clear that all L2 language users adopt different strategies to transmit their meaning than native speakers. Faerch & Kasper (1983) state that the strategies adopted by speakers may also depend upon their interlocutors, that is, upon the person they interact with. What and how we try to communicate are determined by our knowledge of the language and our actual assessment of our interlocutor's linguistic competence and his knowledge of the topic of discourse. But these may change and develop according to the ongoing interaction (p. 15).

### **2.3.4 Personality**

According to Corder (1983) there is some evidence that the use of the communication strategies involve a personality factor, that is, different learners may use different strategies. Some learners are determined risk- takers, others give importance to social factors of interaction above the communication of ideas, but there is a general preference to maintain one's intended message. Just how hard a learner tries will vary with personality and speech situation (as cited by Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 18).

### 2.3.5 Dialogue / Monologue

Faerch and Kasper (1983) claimed that there are many difficulties when defining communication strategies in an interactional perspective, including monologues and dialogues.

Although monologues are as usually a one sided conversation, the speaker still engages the use of communication strategies. Monologues can be Planned or Unplanned. First, planned monologues differ from unplanned monologues in terms of their discourse structures. Further, planned monologues show little redundancy, that is, rephrasing and repetition, which will hinder comprehension. And unplanned monologues show more redundancy which facilitates comprehension. However, the presence of other hesitations and performance variables in unplanned monologues can disturb comprehension.

Dialogues involve two or more speakers and can be subdivided into **interpersonal and transactional**. Interpersonal dialogues are exchanges that promote social relationships. Transactional dialogues are those which convey propositional or factual information, for instance, group discussion about a problem. In each case (interpersonal and transactional) familiarity with the interlocutors will produce conversations with more implications, assumptions, and meaning hidden between the lines. Therefore, in conversation between unfamiliar interlocutors, references and meaning have to be more explicit so that the comprehension can be effective. And when such references are not explicit or clear, misunderstanding can occur. However, everyday social conversation may contain both elements of transactional dialogues and interactional dialogues (Brown, as cited by Ellis, 1985, p.182).

Taking all the above considerations into account, it is difficult to identify communication strategies in monologues because the interlocutor is not present, and there is no clear negotiation of meaning. However, communication problems may also happen in dialogue (Ellis, 1985, p.182).

### 2.3.6 Problem -Source

There is less evidence to demonstrate that strategy choice is influenced by the specific nature of the problem, but this would seem likely. Tarone (1977) notes that

code-switching is more likely when the first and second languages have close cognates. Hamayan and Tucker (1980) found that the extent to which L2 child learners displayed avoidance depended on the grammatical structures involved (as cited by Ellis, 1985, p.185).

### **2.3.7 Learning Situation**

Finally, the learner's use of communication strategies is affected by the situation of use. For instance, learners may use fewer strategies in a classroom environment than in a natural environment, particularly if the pedagogic focus is on correct L2 use, rather than on fluent communication. The situation may also influence the type of strategy used. For instance, in the Capeverdean context learners are faced with the Portuguese language which they used at school and in other formal situations and the English language which the majority of them use only in the classroom. Piranian (1979) found that American University students learning Russian relied more on avoidance, whereas Russian learners with natural exposure also used paraphrasing (as cited by Ellis, 1985, p.186).

## **2.4 Conclusion to the Literature Review**

It is now clear that different authors mentioned have different opinion concerning the definition of communication strategies. It was important to discuss the various definitions and typologies because while there are many similarities between them, there are also subtle differences that influence ones understanding of communication strategies function. Also, it was important to discuss the major factors that influence communication strategies of foreign learners because a learner choice of one or other strategy will depend upon those factors.

In the next chapter, Methodology of the Field Research, there will be an explanation on which typology was chosen on which to base the research. Finally, the methodology of the field research will be outlined.

### **III- METHODOLOGY OF THE FIELD RESEARCH**

In order to answer the thesis question which is, What types of communication strategies do students of different levels in Cape Verde use more frequently when faced with problems in communication?, the researcher designed the following study based primarily on Corder's definition and typology of communication strategies. Classroom observation using a tally sheet was conducted in Cape Verde Classrooms.

#### **3.1 Choosing a Typology Model for Field Research**

Faerch & Kasper (1983) advised that a "definition of communication strategies will have to be based on the research interests of the analyst" (p.2). Based on the research interests of this work, Corder's typology was used to design this research.

Corder is the only author who presented timing and sequence in his explanation of communication strategies. Corder presents in his model (see figure 2.2) the sequence of a learners' attempt to utter the intended message step by step, and when communication strategies takes place in solving the problem being faced. Most important for this work is to know what communication strategies students of different levels use when faced with problems and to be able to help them to utter the intended message. In addition, Corder was selected because he said that the reason which leads the learner to a problem in communication is the inadequacy between ends and means, that is, a lack of balance between the learner intended message and his/her knowledge of the target language.

Corder (1983) defines communication strategies as systematic techniques employed by a speaker to express his/her meaning when faced with some difficulty or problem. By difficulty or problem it is meant the speaker's inadequate command of the language used in interaction (as cited by Faerch & Kasper). Corder believes that communication strategies are employed by the learner to overcome problems in communicating meaning due to inadequacy of language. Also, Corder's typology of communication

strategies was preferred because the researcher, based on classroom experience, shares the same opinion as Corder, that is, English learners in Cape Verde use communication strategies when faced with problems in communicating the intended message. Corder's Typology of communication strategies which lead to successful communication are outlined below.

**Figure 3.1 Typology & Terminology of Corder's Communication Strategies**

<b>Communication Strategies Which lead to successful communication</b>	<b>Communication Strategies which do not lead to successful communication</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borrowing</li> <li>• Paraphrase/ Circumlocution</li> <li>• Semantic Avoidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic Avoidance</li> <li>• Message Abandonment</li> </ul>

The other authors discussed in this work were not chosen because some of their definitions of communication strategies mentioned in the literature review are problematic when applied to this work's research. For instance, Tarone sees Communication Strategies in an interactional perspective, focusing on dialogues and monologues. But, it is difficult to observe monologues because the interlocutor is not present and if the interlocutor is not present there is no clear negotiation of meaning.

In addition, she considers communication strategies as erroneous aspect of the learner uses of language. She claimed that whenever a form produced by a learner is not in accordance with the target language form, it is erroneous. However, if a teacher considers a communication strategy an error, then the student may abandon the message instead of finding a successful way to communicate.

Also, the definition given by Váradi is somewhat problematic. He claimed that communication strategies are "conscious attempts...(quoted from Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p.63)." It is difficult or even impossible to say that communication strategies such as borrowing, paraphrasing or literal translation occur at a conscious or unconscious level. This is nearly impossible to measure only by observing students and their use of communication strategies. Therefore, it was not suitable for the type of observation conducted in this study.

Faerch and Kasper considered communication strategies as part of a specific kind of plan which is used when the initial plan, which is, the message the learner intended to utter, cannot be carried out because of the learner linguistic inadequacy. They

understand communication strategies in a psychological perspective and this becomes difficult if not impossible to measure.

### 3.2 Study Design

Data was collected using a tally sheet because the researcher was looking for the communication strategies which students use more frequently. With a tally sheet the researcher could collect exactly what communication strategies students used, by writing a tally in front of each used strategies. Also, a tally sheet was preferred because according to Nunan (1989) a tally sheet is objective, good for an observer to use while watching class, good for self-analysis by teacher, easy to compare different interactional categories, easy to focus on specific elements, easy to orient one's mind set as observer and the visual presentation is easy to overview (p.79, 80). The designed tally sheet (see appendix I) includes all the message adjustment strategies and resource expansion strategies as outlined by Corder. The message adjustment strategies are topic avoidance, message abandonment, semantic avoidance and message reduction. The resource expansion strategies are borrowing and paraphrase/circumlocution. Also, the name of the school where the classes were observed, city and concelho, the name of the teacher, the time the lesson took place, the level of the students and a description of the speaking activity were recorded.

The population chosen to be observed was secondary school learners on Santiago Island. The three different levels of students were beginners, intermediate and advanced. The beginners were 7<sup>th</sup> grade students with ages between eleven (11) to fourteen (14) years old, the intermediate were 9<sup>th</sup> grade students with ages between fourteen (14) to sixteen (16) years old and advanced level were 12<sup>th</sup> grade students with ages between sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) years old. The schools where the researcher did the field research are three in the city of Praia and two in the countryside (interior of the Island). In the city, the schools chosen were Amor de Deus Secondary School, Palmarejo Secondary School and Constantino Semedo Secondary School. The countryside schools were São Miguel Secondary School and Alfredo da Cruz Secondary School in Calheta and in Santa Cruz.

The thesis question (What types of communication strategies do students of different levels in Cape Verde use more frequently when faced with problems in communication?) mentioned the students levels because some scholars, as for instance



Ellis and Bialystok, found in their studies that the learners level influence the use of communication strategies. And this is a factor that also should be considered when talking about Capeverdean students and their use of communication strategies. The researcher chose to observe three different levels in the secondary schools because the researcher's intention was to compare the different levels use of communication strategies to see if the results and recommendations based on those results would differ. Also, to contribute as much as possible to the development of speaking at those levels and according to the literature review, the level can influence the communication strategies chosen.

First, the researcher chose beginners taking into consideration that for some of them it is the first contact with the English language in a classroom and they are often highly motivated to learn. Thus, if the teacher gives appropriate encouragement and help at this level, it will make things easier for both the teacher and the students as they progress. The 9<sup>th</sup> grade was chosen, because at this level students would have been studying English for three years and they should at least be able to hold a conversation in English. Finally, the 12<sup>th</sup> grade was chosen because for some students it will be the last year they are going to study English. They would have been studying it for six years. It is very important for their future career and job opportunities to be able to hold a fluent conversation in English. If the English teachers in Cape Verde can address specific help and encouragement at those levels, it would be a great advance for the English language at secondary schools and a great contribution for the process of teaching and learning the English language in Cape Verde.

The data was collected in the following way. The researcher set up a day with the teacher who was going to teach the classes to be observed. The teacher was asked to teach a speaking activity, but was not given any information about the study. Neither teacher nor students were told about the purpose of the observation. The researcher did not want the teacher or students to know the purpose of the observation so that class could flow in a natural way. The researcher sat at the back of the class. While the teacher taught the lesson, the researcher filled in the tally sheet.

Finally, the researcher chose not to control the speaking activity, that is, the researcher did not chose a specific speaking activity for teachers to implement during observation because the researcher did not want to change the environment the students were used to. And, it would be more useful and natural if their own teacher designed the speaking activity because he/she knows his/her students abilities and necessities.

The presentation and analysis of the data collected will be discussed in the following chapter.

#### **IV- RESULTS & ANALYSIS OF THE FIELD RESEARCH**

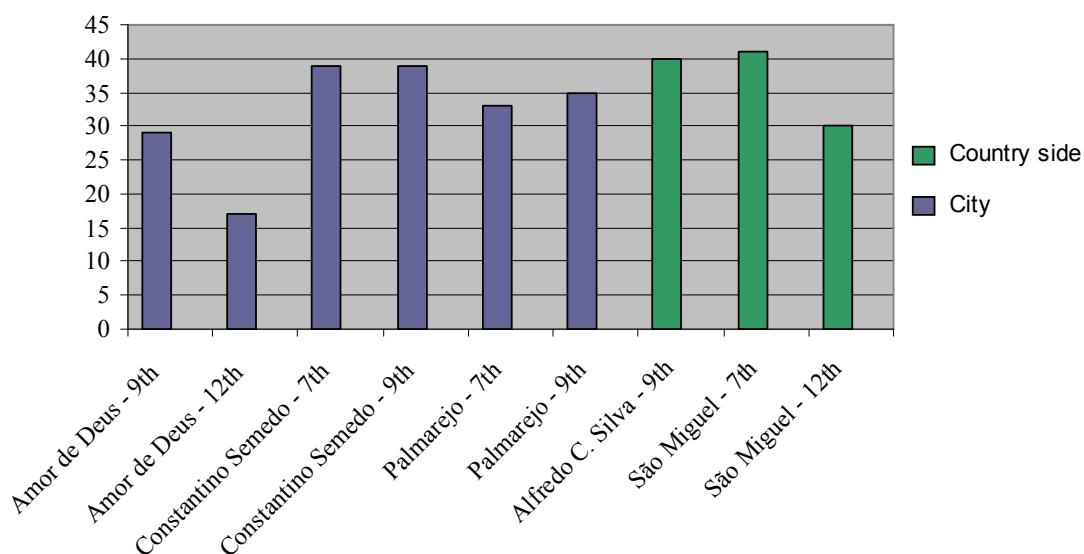
The researcher found significant findings while conducting the field research. In this section, the research will present the results of the field research and analyze them in conjunction with the literature review.

The classes observed were in five different secondary schools. The first two secondary schools are located in the countryside, São Miguel Secondary School and Alfredo da Cruz Silva Secondary School. And the other three secondary schools are located in the Praia city. They are Amor de Deus Secondary School, Constantino Semedo Secondary School and Palmarejo Secondary School. In summary, the researcher observed nine (9) classes in the above listed secondary schools.

It is generally assumed in Cape Verde that the countryside learners have less contact with the English language than the city learners. The latter may have more contact with English through the Internet, television and also through native speakers of that language. Thus, it can be said that the realities of the students between the five secondary schools are probably different.

Almost all of the classes observed were large classes. With the beginners level (7<sup>th</sup> grade), the number of students ranged from 33 to 41 students per class. In the intermediate level (9<sup>th</sup> grade), the number of students was around 29 to 40 students. And with the advanced level (12<sup>th</sup> grade), it was between 17 to 30 students per class. There are larger classes in the countryside than in the city.

The below table 4.1 represents the demographics of the students discussed above for each class observed in Praia city and countryside.

**Figure 4.1 Number of Students per Observed Class**

In each of the classes observed the speaking activities done by the teachers were different. In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the speaking activities were: talking about daily activities using present continuous, picture description using present continuous and asking for and giving personal information (role play).

In the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, the speaking activities were: discussion about domestic violence, talking about past events or experiences, talking about preferences and discovering the world (talking about countries, music and actors).

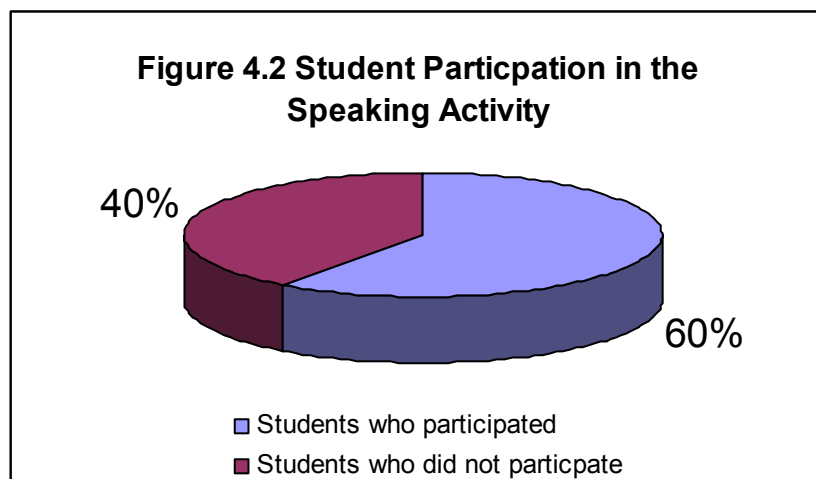
Finally, in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade the speaking activities were role play (giving situations to give advice) and a discussion about Capeverdian culture and cause/consequences of emigration.

It was found by the researcher that the differences between the speaking activities influence the results. The more suitable the speaking activity was for a specific level, the more linguistic resources the students had to participate in the task and the less Message Adjustment Strategies students used to communicate.

There was a discrepancy between the number of students present in the class and the number of students who participated in the task. Sometimes the number of tallies were less than the number of students present in the class. But also the researcher noticed that a single student used more than one communication strategies when trying to utter the intended message. Thus, the number of communication strategies used, even if one student used more than one strategy, was recorded, not the number of students

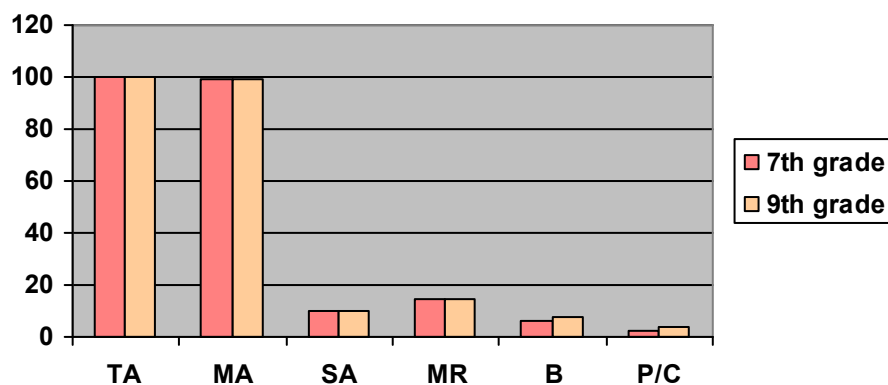
who used communication strategies. In addition, the researcher believes that this discrepancy happened because of the time the lesson took place. Four of the observed lessons happened between 7:30 and 8:00 in the morning. And as an English teacher for four years, the researcher knows from experiences that some students are not motivated to speak early in the morning, especially a foreign language.

The following figure 4.2 represents students' participation in the speaking activity.



The researcher found that 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students, although they are two different levels, used the same communication strategies more frequently. 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students used Topic Avoidance and Message Abandonment more frequently. They used less semantic Avoidance, Message Reduction, Paraphrase/Circumlocution and Borrowing. By making the above statement, the researcher does not mean that every single students in the class used only Topic Avoidance and Message Abandonment; there were a few students that used Borrowing and Message Reduction and did not use Message Abandonment and Topic Avoidance. However, the majority of students primarily used Topic Avoidance and Message Abandonment. The fact that learners in the same class used different communication strategies, lead us back to one of the major factors that can influence the use of communication strategies which is personality. As Corder (1983) said, and it can also be applied to the Capeverdian context, some learners are determined risk- takers (as cited by Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 18). They do not give up easily which leads them to use Resource Expansion Strategies. Others are not determined risk-takers, which leads them to use Message Adjustment more frequently. Thus, learners' communication strategies may vary with personality.

**Figure 4.3 Communication strategies which 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students' use more frequently.**



**TA-** Topic Avoidance

**MA-** Message Abandonment

**SA-** Semantic Avoidance

**MR-** Message Reduction

**B-** Borrowing

**P/C-** Paraphrase or Circumlocution

Example of sentences uttered by 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in the observed class:

- “Teacher it is.....” (Message Abandonment)
- “My father is a good man.” (the student wanted to say that her father is not a violent man – Semantic Avoidance- Discussion about domestic violence)
- “The name of ....” (Message Abandonment )
- “John enjoy....” (Trying to say John enjoys playing football – abandon the message)
- “Teacher I’m....no....” (a student trying to say something but abandons the message by saying ‘no’. The word ‘no’ is not a part of the intended message. Rather an evidence by the learner to show to the teacher that she had abandon the message)
- “sex grave” (a learner translating word by word from the Portuguese word ‘greve de sexo’- Borrowing)
- “I think...man...” (Message Abandonment)

In addition, the researcher also noticed that there was a slight tendency by 9<sup>th</sup> grade learners to increase their use of resource expansion strategies, including Borrowing and Paraphrase/Circumlocution more than 7<sup>th</sup> grade learners. This means that although 9<sup>th</sup> grade learners used the same strategy as 7<sup>th</sup> grade learners more frequently, they are more determined- risk takers. However, it was expected by the researcher that 9<sup>th</sup> grade students would demonstrate increased communication competence, and to be performing somewhere in between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. However, they seem to be performing almost the same as the 7<sup>th</sup> grade learners in terms of which communication strategies they use more frequently.

Another important finding is the ‘pause’ that happens when students are trying to utter the intended message. This is a vital point in students’ communication that may be misunderstood by the teacher. To talk about the pause, we need to return to the speech process represented in the figure 2.2 proposed by Corder about foreign learners trying to utter his/her intended message. The researcher noticed that when learners get to the section *Message Adjustment Possible* they pause before either finding the intended Interlanguage expression or abandoning the message. And when a learner pauses in that moment, the teachers often misunderstands that they had abandoned the message and automatically direct their attention to another learner. But, in fact, the learner’s pause could be his/her attempt to seek for the right Interlanguage expression to help him/her utter the intended message. The teachers’ reaction in that particular moment may lead the learner to abandon the message or help them achieve their communication goal. At this phase the teacher intervention is very important. It can influence the learner to utter the intended message or to abandon it. It is important for the teacher to identify the students’ pause and work on suitable encouragement or helping techniques.

Also, the researcher noticed that there was a tendency with 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade learners to use the mother tongue (Creole) or Portuguese after the pause. For instance, in one of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes observed the following happened:

*Teacher: What do you like eating? (Directing to the entire class)*

*Student 1: I like eating...*

*Teacher: What?*

*Student 1: (silence)*

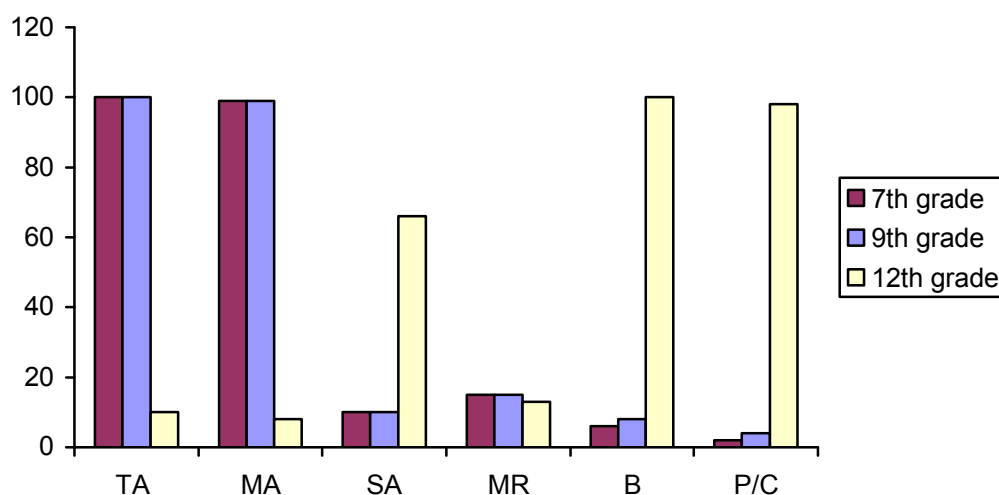
*Teacher: What do you like eating, Carla? (Directing to another student)*

*Student 1: Hey, teacher “un gosta de comi bolo” (I like eating cake).*

In the above situation we can see clearly that student 1 had abandoned the message in the first attempt, because the student did not finish the intended message. Also, he/she did not respond to the teacher's prompt (what?). But student 1 later interruption when the teacher directed the question to another learner shows that the learner's intention was not to abandon the message. Rather, he/she was trying to find an appropriate word to finish the intended message. By using his/her mother tongue to utter the intended message, the student demonstrates that he/she really wanted to express his/her idea. If the teacher had understood the student's pause, then the teacher could have helped the student to finish uttering the intended message.

With the 12<sup>th</sup> grade learners, the situation was different concerning the students' use of communication strategies than the situation with 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade learners. The 12<sup>th</sup> grade learners use Borrowing and Paraphrase/ Circumlocution more frequently than Topic Avoidance, Message Abandonment, Message Reduction and Semantic Avoidance. This means that 12<sup>th</sup> grade learners in Cape Verde use Resource Expansion Strategies more frequently than Message Adjustment Strategies. Fortunately, by using more Resource Expansion strategies, 12<sup>th</sup> grade learners are more able to hold a conversation in English than 7<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade learners. This confirms what Tarone (1977) and Ellis (1985) found in their study. They stated that less able learners prefer to use Reduction Strategies (called by Corder Message adjustment Strategies) more than Resource Expansion or Achievement Strategies, which are more used by advanced levels.

**Figure 4.4 Summary all the Communication Strategies used more frequently by 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade learners in Cape Verde.**



**TA-** Topic Avoidance



**MA-** Message Abandonment

**SA-** Semantic Avoidance

**MR-** Message Reduction

**B-** Borrowing

**P/C-** Paraphrase or Circumlocution

The researcher also noticed that there is a tendency with 12<sup>th</sup> grade learners to use Semantic Avoidance more than the others Message Adjustment Strategies. Semantic Avoidance is when a learner says something slightly different from what he/she intended, but still in general relevant to the topic of discourse. It is better to use Semantic Avoidance than Topic Avoidance and Message Abandonment because the learner will get closer to achieving his/her communication goal. With Semantic Avoidance, the learner gets around the problem by saying “almost” what he/she intended to say, only slightly differently.

Example of sentences uttered by 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in the observed class:

- “Did you give her much ‘atenção’” ( Borrowing)
- “I will feel broken. Teacher ‘em baixo’... down” (Borrowing & Paraphrase/Circumlocution ‘trying to explain that he will feel upset)
- “Teacher kill”. (Semantic Avoidance-instead of teacher I will kill my girlfriend)
- “What posso fazer?” (Borrowing -instead of ‘what can I do?)
- “They are... they have boss, they beat them and make them work hard. (Paraphrase/Circumlocution - trying to explain the intended word- slaves).
- “Sometimes they immi... travel?... go to another country for a long time to work... (Paraphrase/Circumlocution -trying to say ‘they emigrate’).

In summary, the main results or findings of the field research were 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade learners use the same communication strategies, Message Adjustment, more frequently, and the 12<sup>th</sup> grade learners use more Resource Expansion strategies. Also, this research identified the critical “pause” that happens when learners get to the moment of Message Adjustment Possible.

The next section will present recommendations and conclusions to the work.

## **V- CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this section the researcher will present recommendations according to the findings of the field research and in conjunction with literature review and will then conclude, explaining this work's importance to the Cape Verdean English teaching community.

The first recommendation is that the number of speaking activities used by the teachers should be increased in all levels. Learners will only be able to communicate freely and without facing many problems if they have opportunities to communicate with each other. However, that is not enough. The speaking activity should be about real-life communication situation; it should be authentic and meaningful. Thus, if learners are frequently engaged in communication tasks in the classroom, there is much more possibility of students developing Resource Expansion Strategies than Message Adjustment strategies.

Sometimes our students are more able to succeed in a speaking activity than we think. We just have to give them opportunities to be successful. There are some strategies the teachers can use. First, teachers could teach different types of speaking activity in the class. Next, teachers can use textbooks speaking activities and adapt them according to their students' context and necessities. And, teachers could read the present research in order to understand communication strategies and their complexities including Corder's model (figure 2.2) to better assist their students. Following these recommendations it would be easier for learners to be able to solve their communication problems by using the appropriate communication strategies and this will lead the learner to successfully utter his/her intended message.

Second, the speaking activity should be according to the students' level. For instance, a teacher cannot do a speaking activity about domestic violence in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade where he/she asks them to give their opinion about the topic in English. This activity will not succeed because the students' linguistic resources do not allow them to do it. Thus, teachers should create activities appropriate for their students' level and

according to their reality and context. Thus, the more appropriate the speaking activity is for the learners' level, the more chance they have to use communication strategies that will lead to effective communication. And this leads the learners to use communication strategies which will help them to utter the intended message.

Third, the speaking activity should be done in a systematic and organized way. A speaking activity lesson should include a pre-speaking, a during-speaking and a post-speaking activity section. If the 9<sup>th</sup> grade teacher mentioned in the analysis of the field research had done a pre-speaking activity in which he taught the vocabulary students would need during-speaking activity, the learner would not have told him that they do not have enough vocabulary to discuss the topic suggested by the teacher. Teachers should provide the necessary vocabulary for learners to engage in a communicative task. If a teacher designed a speaking activity without a pre-speaking section where he/she presents the vocabulary the learner will need to engage in the task, there is more possibility of students using message adjustment strategies than resource expansion strategies

Fourth, teachers should look for the pause that individual students use when using the speech process represented in the figure 2.2 proposed by Corder. If the teacher is able to identify the individual student's pause, then the teacher can help the student not to abandon the message or use the strategy of topic avoidance. The teacher should help the learner by encouraging him/her to keep talking, providing clues and even providing the exact vocabulary the learner is seeking. This will lead the learner to utter the intended message.

Next, teachers should try to involve every student in the speaking activity. It was mentioned in the analysis of the field research that there was a discrepancy between the number of students present in the class and the number of students who participated in the task. To avoid this discrepancy, teachers should try to reduce their speaking time and increase students speaking time in the class. There are some strategies that can be used to involve more students. When doing group works, put the less talkative students in the same group as the talkative ones. Try to explain the task as clearly as possible so that every student understands what they are supposed to do and are able to participate freely. Finally, allowing five or more minutes of motivation before the task would be helpful. If every student is involved in the speaking activity, there is more possibility for the teacher to recognize the communication strategies they are using and lead them to use the communication strategies which lead to successful communication.

While analysing the results of the field research some other questions were raised. These questions could be used as future researches in the same area.

Research could be done about city learners in comparison to countryside learners' use of communication strategies in relation to their exposure to English outside of the classroom. Does the difference in contact with the English language influence the use of communication strategies? How much does the contact with English influence students' communication competence?

Finally, research could be done to investigate why 9<sup>th</sup> grade learners in Cape Verde use the same communication strategies as 7<sup>th</sup> grade students, instead of presenting a more advanced ability to communicate. They are two different levels of students; their syllabus objectives are different and the contents being taught are also different. What are the causes of 9<sup>th</sup> grade learners' use of the same communication strategies as 7<sup>th</sup> grade learners? Is it the number of communication activities that happen in the class? Is it because 9<sup>th</sup> grade students' have a more limited knowledge of vocabulary? In one of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes observed a student expressed clearly that they have problems with vocabulary. After the teacher's explanation of the task, a student said "but teacher we do not have enough vocabulary to talk about this in English". Finally, is it their awareness of their lack vocabulary which lowers their motivation to participate in communicative tasks which happens in the class? The answer to these questions will be helpful to the process of teaching/learning English in Cape Verde, especially in regards to our understanding of communication strategies.

Important recommendations have been presented in conjunction with the findings of this research concerning the use of communication strategies in the Cape Verdean Classroom. These will contribute to help Capeverdean teachers to take a great step concerning their learners' communication competence. Also, by reading this paper, teachers would considerably increase the effectiveness of communicative tasks in Cape Verde classrooms and have a more precise idea of how to assist students of different levels when faced with problems in communication. It is said that a good teacher is a reflective and innovative teacher. Thus, this paper gives Capeverdean teachers the opportunity to be researchers and learn more about Capeverdean students' communicative abilities and to know how to assist them whenever they are faced with problems in communication.

It was important to talk about teaching speaking in Cape Verdean classrooms concerning learners of different levels use of communication strategies because it is assumed that the objective of learning a foreign language is to be able to communicate

in that language. In addition, one of the objectives of the English syllabus in Cape Verde is to increase learners' communication competence. Next, tourism has been developing in Cape Verde, which will give learners more job opportunities. Thus, this paper is a great contribution to the development of Cape Verdean learners' communication competence and ability to communicate their ideas, thoughts and opinions in English without problem.

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## Appendix I

School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/ Concelho: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Students' level: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of  
 Students: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaking Activity:

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COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES	
<b>1- <i>Message Adjustment Strategies</i></b>	
a) Topic Avoidance	
b) Message Abandonment	
c) Semantic Avoidance	
d) Message Reduction	
<b>2- <i>Resource Expansion Strategies</i></b>	
a) Borrowing	
b) Paraphrase or Circumlocution	

Other comments:

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